

November 20, 2006

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

**Re: Comments on FCC Order Establishing Pilot Program Under Rural Health
Care Funding Mechanism, WC Docket No. 02-60**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

I am writing on behalf of the University of Louisville in support of the Commission's decision to fund connections to the Internet2 backbone as part of its pilot program to develop a nationwide broadband network dedicated to health.

The University of Louisville has been a connector to the Internet2 backbone network for over five years. We consider Internet2 an essential component of our education and research infrastructure; and the Internet2 backbone network offers us advanced networking capabilities with extremely high levels of reliability, security, and capacity. As a result, the University is able to participate in research collaboration with colleagues across the United States and the world.

The UofL Health Sciences Center is very active in research involving medical visualization, drug discovery, and bioinformatics, and participates actively as a provider to the Kentucky state-wide tele-health initiative. Among the innovative research collaborations that the University is participating in is the DataSeam initiative – an effort to use networked computing resources from across the state in a grid computing environment for cancer research.

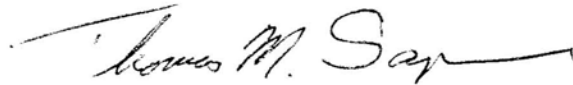
We have been following, with great interest, the Commission's pilot program to further develop broadband networks dedicated to medical and health care applications. Our current tele-health initiative and grid computing projects are using the state education network, but could greatly benefit from upgraded broadband networking. We hope that the Commission's pilot program could enable us to expand these programs to reach an increased number of health-care providers with a higher-quality of service.

The University of Louisville strongly agrees that it makes sense, for purposes of this pilot program, to have all health care providers connect to the same backbone. It is absolutely essential that local, regional, and state-wide health care networks be interoperable and interconnected. Furthermore, it makes sense for Internet2 to be that backbone. Internet2's broad geographic reach and vast membership make it a truly nationwide network, enabling UofL to connect with universities, government research institutions, and other important entities in all

fifty states. In comparison, a connection to the National LambdaRail's backbone does not provide the same capabilities. We have been very pleased with the Internet2 networking capabilities including extremely high levels of reliability, security, and capacity, and we are in the process of upgrading our Internet2 connection to a 10Gbps NewNet connection. We find that Internet2 has a proven track record in providing state-wide access to its backbone network, as demonstrated by its successful K-20 initiative promoting the use of advanced networks to connect members of the K-20 education community. The universities and K-12 education in Kentucky have been members of Internet2 through a Sponsored Education Group Participation agreement for the over two years. This state-wide group is very active and has sponsored a variety of I2 activities, events, and initiatives.

We urge the Commission to affirm its decision to fund connections between state and regional health care provider networks and the Internet2 backbone. Based on our own experience, the Commission correctly concluded that doing so would give health care providers "the opportunity to benefit from advanced applications in continuing education and research."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas M. Sawyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Thomas M. Sawyer
Vice President - Information Technology
University of Louisville